

Dear Thornapple Covenant Church Family,

As has been our practice from the beginning, we want to keep you fully updated as to the Always Making Room initiative. Several weeks ago, at a special congregational meeting, we voted overwhelmingly to proceed with the project by affirming the mortgage with National Covenant Properties. We also mentioned that as the Building Committee continued to hone the planning process with the general contractor and architect, we would soon hear more about the plan for moving forward.

Since then, the Building Committee has been meeting every two weeks, at least, and at our elder meeting on June 15, we received a report and recommendation from the Building Committee. The challenging reality at this stage in the process is that we are faced with escalated and unanticipated costs. Based on current realities, the cost of what we thought we could accomplish for \$5.3M is going to increase. The Building Committee unanimously recommended to the Elders that we continue with the design drawing phase of our project, based on their prayerful consideration of all factors. Elders had a thorough discussion and then agreed that for two weeks, we would pray as a group of elders and reconvene to see if we could discern what God would have us do.

On June 28, the Elders, Pastors, Chair of the Building Committee and Chairs of the AMR Capital Campaign met together. After more discussion, prayer and conversation with Rob Hall from National Covenant Properties, we unanimously decided to accept the Building Committees recommendation and continue to move the process forward by next going to the congregation for input and direction. Based on the Building Committee's schedule and upcoming meetings, we anticipate having firmer cost projections by mid-September. Over the next few months we will communicate and dialogue with you in order to prepare for a special congregational meeting in late September, where we will gather together to discern God's will and affirm next steps.

Recently, Rob preached about Sarah and Hagar and how our faith is often tested by obstacles we did not anticipate or welcome. In many ways, this feels like an obstacle we did not anticipate and so we have turned to God in prayer and collected discernment thus far. Yet we also have ample evidence of God's clear and steady presence and direction in this initiative during the past three years.

We would simply ask each of you to join us in praying for God's continued clear direction as our AMR story continues to unfold. We will continue to provide information as we have it, but we wanted to keep you informed on this new reality and invite your prayers. Also feel free to speak with Rob or Scott (or any Elder) if you have questions or concerns. We are in this together and hope to see God use this "obstacle" to continue to grow our church community together in mission and in unity.

Thanks for your support and prayers in this unfolding journey.

Grace and Peace,

Rob Peterson Scott Bolinder
Senior Pastor Council of Elders Chair